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*Remarks on the Abstract Tables of the Men Discharged from the Military Service of the East India Company.* By EDWARD BALFOUR, Esq., Assistant Surgeon to the Right Honourable the Governor's Body Guard.

IN the five years from September 1842 to August 1847, inclusive, 2,419 of the Madras Native Army were discharged the service.

A cursory examination of the causes which led to their discharge shows that crime, disease, and natural physical unfitness, were the chief agencies in operation: we cannot, however, ascertain the exact share that each of these causes had; for, of the 2,419 individuals who have been in this manner removed from the strength of the army, 1,077, or nearly the half of them, were entered on the monthly discharge rolls, without any statement of the crime or cause which had led to their dismissal. Had this omission not been made, the records would have furnished a sufficient number of facts to admit of many more practical deductions than they now allow; but, even as they are, they furnish information of a nature calculated to assist us in the selection of recruits, the repression of crime, and the internal economy of the Army.

Although dismissal or discharge from the Service is more frequently had recourse to in the native army of India than amongst Her Majesty's soldiers, the military code admits of several other punishments. The Articles of War in force, when these rolls of discharged men were for the first time published, were brought into operation in the year 1827, and contained 82 articles, 43 of which specified crimes punishable by military courts, and the punishments which the latter could award. These punishments were death, corporal punishment, stoppage of pay and allowances, fines, dismissal, reduction and forfeiture of pension. Although this code continued in force until 1845, it was greatly altered by the General Orders of the Governor-General of 24th February, 1835, by which corporal punishment in the native armies was prohibited, and discharge from the service substituted for it; and it was still further altered by the Penal Act of 1839, sanctioning, along with their discharge from the service, imprisonment, with or without hard labour.

In this code of 1827 there were 15 articles specifying crimes for which military courts could award sentence of death; but as the chief punishment before 1835 was flogging, so discharge from the service and imprisonment with hard labour was the usual sentence after 1839.

On these articles being annulled by Act XX., 7th October, 1845, the code, then substituted, contained 154 articles, 91 of which related to crimes and their punishments; and the abolition of corporal punishment having been found to work very unsatisfactorily, it was by this Act again introduced, but in so greatly restricted a form, that even a general court-martial could only award 200 lashes, and these only for certain offences. Imprisonment with hard labour, which had become so common since 1839, was greatly restricted by this Act, it being permitted to be awarded only for the most disgraceful crimes; in 19 articles death or other punishment could be awarded, the remaining

articles admitting of imprisonment, simple or solitary, and with or without hard labour, and discharge.

The provisions in the articles of war of Act XX., 7th October, 1845, may be said to be still in force, but amended by the Act of 1st March, 1848, promulgating a new code, in which the principal alterations made consist in conferring increased power on commanding officers of regiments, making some articles more comprehensive, specifying some offences with more minuteness, changing slightly the mode of applying punishment and providing for three crimes, viz.: striking or forcing a sentry, refusing to work on field-works, and a sentry plundering property under his charge, which were not detailed in former codes. The code of 1st March, 1848, contains 158 articles, 96 of which specify crimes and their punishments, and, as in that of 1845, by 19 of its articles military courts can award the punishment of death; corporal punishment may still be awarded, but it is now restricted to 80 lashes, and it is understood to be the wish of Government that it be awarded only for certain offences, viz.: mutiny, violence to superiors, insubordination, drunkenness on duty and disgraceful conduct, and even for such offences to be as seldom as possible carried into effect.

In order to understand the frequency of dismissal and discharge, it must also be mentioned that it has always been in the power of the Governor-in-council and Commander-in-chief to substitute dismissal from the service for the punishments which courts-martial award; so that there are three modes by which men are removed from the service for crimes: some soldiers being discharged by sentence of courts-martial, some in consequence of having been sentenced by the courts-martial or the civil courts of the country to punishments which, from their degrading nature, rendered those on whom they were inflicted unworthy of remaining longer amongst soldiers, and some discharges are the punishments substituted or commuted by the superior authorities for those awarded by the military courts.

As the benefits and rewards of service should be commensurate with its punishments to allow the latter to exert their fullest influence, and with the view of exhibiting the extent of the punishment inflicted by discharging a soldier, it may be mentioned that the pay of the native armies of India, particularly those of Bengal and Bombay, is greatly above the amount earned by their relations or others of their own class of society employed in the occupations of civil life. This is the case even when the soldier first enlists, and his pay is afterwards, at stated periods, increased\*. Besides this every private soldier may obtain a commission, the native officers of the regular army, Jemadars and Subadars, rising exclusively from the ranks. They also receive medals when decreed to the army, and they are admitted into two military orders, viz.: the "Order of Merit," with the title of "Bahadur," into which the private, equally with the commissioned officer, may be admitted, and the "Order of British India," with the title of "Sirdar Bahadur," for native officers of distinguished services.

It will be seen from this that discharge from the service is a severe punishment, and in this light the native soldiers regard it.

\* The first increase takes place after 16, and the second increase after 20 years' service.

*Abstract Table showing the number of Hindoos, Mahomedans, and Christians, of the Madras Native Army, annually Discharged the Service; also the aggregate numbers of their Years of Age and Years of Service, and the Average of the same at the date of their Discharge.— For the five years 1842-43 to 1846-47, inclusive.*

	Total numbers in the five years from 1st September, 1842, to 31st August, 1847.			Aggregate Ages and Services in the five years from September, 1842, to 31st August, 1847.										Average Age. Period of Service.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																				
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The code of 1845 and that of 1848 are both more minute in their specification of crime than the code of 1827; but from the nature of military service and the closeness of the links in the chain of discipline, a soldier committing himself generally infringes more than one article, and when attempting therefore to classify the offences which led to the discharge of these 2,419 Madras native soldiers, the graver crime has been the guide to the arrangement, as it doubtless had been to the sentence of the court-martial.

It will be seen from the table that of the 91 articles providing for crimes, in the code of the 7th October, 1845, it is only on 20, or less than the fourth part, that the discharges have been awarded, viz:—

Mutiny.	Disgraceful conduct.
Violence to superiors.	Quitting or sleeping on post in time of peace.
Disobedience of lawful command.	Accepting bribes to procure leave, &c.
Desertion.	Quitting guard or picquet in time of peace.
Drunkenness on Duty.	Absence from parade.
Gross insubordination in the ranks, or before a court-martial.	Absence without leave, or over-staying leave, &c.
Breach of arrest or confinement.	Absence from cantonment after hours.
False statement or certificate to obtain pension.	Selling, losing, or wasting ammunition.
Malingering.	Crimes not specified, to the prejudice of good order, &c.
Selling or injuring arms.	
Embezzlement.	

If it be established by further experience that these 20 classes of crime are of most frequent occurrence, the importance of directing considerable attention to their prevention or repression must be obvious.

Some of the above classes of crime were of more frequent occurrence than others, and it may be useful to allude to them individually.

*Mutiny.*—37 Native soldiers are recorded to have been discharged for mutiny in the 5 years, 6 of whom were Hindoos and 31 Mahomedans. In that period the average strength of the Madras native army was 74,300\*, from which it appears that the average annual number of discharged mutinous soldiers was only 7·4 in every 10,000.

It will be observed from the table that there were none discharged for mutiny in 1842-43, 1843-44, or in 1845-46; but that of the 37 individuals, 31 were dismissed in 1844-45, and 6 in 1846-47, and those who combined appear to have been all Hindoos or all Mahomedans.

From this irregularity of its appearance, it may be inferred that causes of mutiny are not in constant operation, or that the Madras native soldiers have not a mutinous disposition, but do occasionally band themselves together to obtain some specific object.

The Hindoos discharged for mutiny were on the average 26 years of age, and had served  $7\frac{1}{2}$  years.

The average age of the Mahomedans was 31 years, and their service 14 years. The mutineers were therefore men of full growth and above the average length of service; all of them, therefore, old soldiers, whose combinations must be regarded as a serious matter.

*Violence to Superiors.*—Only 6 men are mentioned as discharged

\* See Appendix, No. I.

the service for this offence, 3 Hindoos and 3 Mahomedans, most of them old soldiers, their average age being  $25\frac{1}{2}$  years, and their average service  $7\frac{1}{2}$  years.

*Disobedience of lawful command* led to the discharge of 23 men, 16 of whom were Hindoos, 6 Mahomedans, and only 1 Christian.

The average age of the discharged men was upwards of 25 years, and their service 6 years 8 months. This crime seems therefore to be an offence of the older soldiers.

*Desertion*.—Of the 40 soldiers discharged for deserting, 31 were Hindoos and 9 Mahomedans. This is evidently an offence of very young soldiers, for their average age was only 21 years and their service 2 years; and the Hindoos, the less military class of the Madras Presidency, have apparently deserted in somewhat greater numbers than the Mahomedans.

*Drunkenness on Duty* has not often occurred apparently, for only 7 cases of discharge are recorded from it, viz.: 5 Hindoos, 1 Mahomedan, and 1 Christian. This likewise seems to be a vice of the older soldiers, for the age of the offenders was, on the average, 25 years 5 months, and their average service 6 years and 1 month.

Only 1 man was discharged for gross insubordination in the ranks, and 2 for breach of arrest.

*False Statements or Certificates to obtain Pension* is a crime for which 10 men are recorded to have been discharged. Their average age was  $24\frac{1}{2}$  years.

*Malingering* led to the discharge of 13 men, 7 Hindoos and 6 Mahomedans, all of them of the older soldiers, their average age being 26 years, and service 7 years 8 months.

Three men were discharged for selling or injuring arms, and 1 for embezzlement.

*Disgraceful Conduct* led to the discharge of 127, of whom 69 were Hindoos, 51 Mahomedans, and 7 Christians. Nearly the whole of this number, viz.: 114, had committed theft, had robbed or been found with stolen property in their possession. If we assume  $28\frac{1}{2}$  years to be the average age and 10 years the average service of the Madras native army\* it would appear to be among the younger soldiers that disgraceful conduct occurs, for the average age of all those discharged was 24 years and their service 5 years.

*Quitting or Sleeping on Post in Time of Peace* led to the discharge of 18 soldiers; young men, their average age being 23 years 8 months, and service  $5\frac{1}{2}$  years.

Only 2 men accepted bribes and were discharged; 3 who quitted their guard; and 5 for absence from parade.

*For Absence without leave, or overstaying leave*, 42 discharges are mentioned, 23 Hindoos and 19 Mahomedans.

Young men apparently commit these offences, for those discharged were on the average 23 years of age, and had served only 4 years and 8 months.

Only 2 discharges are mentioned under the head of absence from cantonment after hours, both of them being young Hindoo soldiers; and 1 Christian of 8 years' service was discharged for wasting ammunition.

\* See Appendix, No. II.

Crimes not specified, but to the prejudice of good order and military discipline, led to the discharge of 320 soldiers, 151 of whom were Hindoos, 130 Mahomedans, and 39 Christians. There are 80 offences enumerated which these 320 soldiers had committed, but the most frequent were insubordinate conduct, for which 32 were dismissed; drunkenness 55; incorrigibly bad character 90; and discovered to have been discharged from another regiment previously 101; total 278, or six-sevenths of the whole of this class of *crime*; only the younger soldiers appear to commit themselves in this manner, for the average age of all dismissed was only 22 years and 8 months, with 3 years and 10 months' service.

Physical causes have occasioned the discharge of 569 soldiers, of whom 327 were Hindoos, 172 Mahomedans, and 70 Christians. Part of those numbers had evidently, however, been discharged for diseases which from their nature must have appeared in the course of the soldiers' service, and part of them on account of constitutional defects existing naturally. It will be useful, therefore, to examine the men discharged for physical causes under these two heads—

1. Discharged on account of Disease, viz.:

	215 Hindoos.		103 Mahomedans.		20 Christians.		338 Total.
	Yrs.	Mths.	Yrs.	Mths.	Yrs.	Mths.	Yrs. Mths.
Whose average age at date of discharge .....	23	4	22	6	20	9	22 11
Whose average service at date of discharge .....	4	6	4	2	4	2	4 5
Whose average age when entered .....	18	10	18	4	16	7	18 6

The average age of all discharged for disease was about 23 years, and after  $4\frac{1}{2}$  years' service.

II. Discharged on account of Physical Defects, viz:

	112 Hindoos.		69 Mahomedans.		50 Christians.		231 Total.
	Yrs.	Mths.	Yrs.	Mths.	Yrs.	Mths.	Yrs. Mths.
Whose average age at date of discharge .....	19	7	19	8	17	11	19 2
Whose average service at date of discharge .....	1	10	1	11	1	10	1 10
Whose average age when entered .....	17	9	17	9	16	1	17 4

The greater number of the Christians were discharged from inability to learn music, but the Hindoos and Mahomedans were mostly

discharged for imbecility, constitutional debility, and incapacity to learn their drill. It will be observed that the soldiers discharged for these causes were only 19 years of age on the average, and had served only 1 year and 10 months.

The cause of the discharge of 1077 soldiers is not detailed. The omission is to be regretted, as it prevents us determining the exact numbers discharged for each crime, &c.; but they seem to have been enlisted and again discharged at a like youthful age to that of the men whose crimes and physical ailments are recorded. Of the 1077 thus discharged, viz.:

	579 Hindoos.	454 Mahomedans.	44 Christians.	1,077 Total.
	Yrs. Mths.	Yrs. Mths.	Yrs. Mths.	Yrs. Mths.
Their average age at date of discharge .....	23 10	24 0	24 3	23 11
Their average service at date of discharge .....	5 3	5 7	6 2	5 5
Their average age when entered .....	18 7	18 5	18 1	18 6

These 1077 soldiers were discharged before they were 24 years of age, after only  $5\frac{1}{2}$  years' service.

Only 110 soldiers in 5 years, or 2 in 10,000 annually, received their discharge at their own request.

They had served  $5\frac{1}{2}$  years, and were 24 years on the average at the date of their discharge.

Altogether 663 soldiers are recorded to have been discharged for crimes, viz.:

	337 Hindoos.	271 Mahomedans.	55 Christians.	663 Total.
	Yrs. Mths.	Yrs. Mths.	Yrs. Mths.	Yrs. Mths.
Whose average age at date of discharge .....	23 0	24 1	23 4	23 7
Whose average service at date of discharge .....	4 5	5 6	4 6	4 10
Their average age when enlisted .....	18 7	18 7	18 10	18 9

It would, however, appear from these tables that some offences are committed by the older men, and others almost exclusively by the younger part of the army.



*Offences of the Older\* Soldiers.*

	Number Discharged.	Total Ages.		Total Service.	
		Yrs.	Mths.	Yrs.	Mths.
Mutiny .....	37	1,118	0	479	4
Violence to superiors .....	6	153	0	46	2
Disobedience of lawful command .....	23	580	0	154	10
Drunkenness on duty .....	7	178	0	53	0
Gross insubordination in the ranks or before a court-martial .....	1	26	0	8	8
Breach of arrest or confinement .....	2	56	0	21	3
Malingering .....	13	340	0	100	1
Wasting ammunition .....	1	25	0	8	3
Total .....	90	2,476	0	861	7
Average .....	....	27	6	9	6

*Offences of the Younger Soldiers.*

	Number Discharged.	Aggregate Ages.		Aggregate Services.	
		Yrs.	Mths.	Yrs.	Mths.
Desertion .....	40	844	0	81	4
False statement to obtain pension .....	10	246	0	43	2
Selling arms .....	3	63	0	10	0
Embezzlement .....	1	23	0	2	10
Disgraceful conduct .....	127	3,068	0	668	10
Quitting or sleeping on post .....	18	430	0	101	5
Accepting bribes .....	2	48	0	9	7
Quitting guard or picket in peace ....	3	80	0	22	7
Absence without leave .....	42	974	0	197	5
Absence from parade .....	5	118	0	18	2
Absence from cantonment after hours....	2	43	0	9	0
Crimes to prejudice of good order, &c.	320	7,273	6	1,227	1
Total .....	573	13,210	6	2,391	5
Average .....	....	23	0	4	2

It would appear from this that the more grave military crimes are committed by the older soldiers, but that few of them do actually commit themselves; the number of them discharged being only 90 out of 663, or a seventh part of the whole of those dismissed for recorded crimes.

The average age and service of all the 2,419 discharged men was as follows, viz. :—

	1,298 Hindoos.		942 Mahomedans.		179 Christians.		2,419 Total.	
	Yrs.	Mths.	Yrs.	Mths.	Yrs.	Mths.	Yrs.	Mths.
Whose average age at date of discharge .....	23	4	23	6	21	9	23	3
Whose average service at date of discharge .....	4	7	5	1	4	4	4	9
Whose average age when enter- tained .....	18	9	18	5	17	5	18	6

\* By the term Older Soldier is meant a soldier above 5 years' service.

The average age of all the discharged men was under 24 years, and their average service 4 years and 9 months; they were therefore enlisted when only 18 years and 6 months old.

Military commanders and medical officers of armies have repeatedly objected to the entertainment of too young soldiers, and, in recent times, none have more strongly pointed out the inefficiency of this kind of troops and the great value of old soldiers than the Emperor Napoleon, and only last year his Grace the Duke of Wellington; and the same is inculcated in the writings of MM. Coche Kirkhoff, and Inspector-General Marshall. The chief objection which they have offered, however, has been the physical inability of young men to undergo the fatigues of field-service; but we observe from these tables that there are grave objections to their enlistment in a moral point of view, for in the five years from 1842-43 to 1846-47, while 569 were discharged for disease and physical unfitness, whose average age was 21 years and 5 months, and their service 3 years and 4 months, 663 men were discharged for crimes, whose ages only averaged 23 years and 7 months and their service 4 years and 10 months.

The diseased and physically unfit men had been entertained when 18 years of age, and were discharged again at the age of 21. But the soldiers have been discharged for crimes at a somewhat later period of life, having been enlisted when 18 years and 9 months old on the average, and discharged at the age of 23 years and 7 months; a difference of age of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  years.

The ages at which the greatest tendency to crime and to disease occurs amongst native soldiers may, however, be nearer each other than this, for while sickly men come immediately under notice (and the result of sickness being generally calculable), and diseased or broken men are at once got rid of, moral sickness, *i. e.*, the vices and crimes of young men, is considered more obscure, and a young soldier's first offences are gently dealt with, and his discharge is effected only after repeated admonitions and severe punishments have failed. And, therefore, although 21 years be the average age at which the native soldiers have been discharged for sickness, and 23 years 7 months the average age of those discharged for crimes, there may probably be a closer connection between mental and bodily sickness than these  $2\frac{1}{2}$  years of difference would evince.

As the greater part of the crimes seem to have been committed by young soldiers, and their crimes being of a nature which the thoughtlessness and excitability of youth and their weakness in resisting temptation would lead them to commit, it might be a question whether it would not be useful to keep the younger soldiers more constantly employed, and thereby exhaust that nervous energy the superabundance of which thrusts them into errors; to order, for instance, all soldiers under 5 years' service to more frequent exercises than those above it.

But as the whole of the 2,419 soldiers had been entertained when only 18 years and 6 months old, and were discharged before the age of 24, there need be no hesitation in asserting that the greater numbers of them were enlisted and again discharged before ever they were physically fit for the fatigues of field-service.

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